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On a Comparative Statement of Prices and Wages during the Years from 1842 to 1849. By G. R. PORTER, F.R.S.

[Read before the Statistical Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 17th September, 1849.]

ALTHOUGH it is forbidden to the Statistical Section of the British Association to discuss the propriety of public measures while they are under discussion by the Government or Legislature, it falls strictly within its province to ascertain and to exhibit the result of such measures after they shall have been adopted and are in operation, provided their effects are capable of being exhibited through the medium of numbers or by means of computations.

The propriety of this distinction is very apparent. The Association is not a political body, but one where persons professing all shades of opinion meet for the prosecution of objects in which all have an equal interest, and in regard to which, although differences of opinion may and will arise, and give occasion for discussion, the controversies will be carried on without exciting those unfriendly feelings which but too often rise up between persons who take different sides upon matters connected with public policy.

The subject which I have chosen for investigation upon this occasion affords a very decided example of the distinction here drawn. If, while the measures for bringing about a revolution in the long-cherished commercial policy of this country were under discussion in the Legislature, any attempt had been here made to approach the question, it would have been hardly possible to avoid the giving of offence to one party or another; whereas now that those measures have been extensively carried out into practice, it is felt to be an inquiry of the deepest interest to all, whether they have been productive of any and of what result to the great bulk of the community. In the prosecution of that inquiry, on this occasion, there can be no danger of giving offence to any one, so long as it shall be confined to actual facts as exhibited in figures that are capable of verification, and while no attempt is made to press them into the service of party disputation.

The usefulness, not only to ourselves, but to those who will come after us, of records such as those a sample of which I have now to bring forward, will be apparent to every one who has at any time attempted to investigate the comparative condition at different periods of our working population. About sixteen years ago I undertook such an investigation, and had then to lament the difficulty, not to say the impossibility, of collecting any considerable amount of information upon which reliance could be placed, so that my labours were, on that occasion, far from satisfactory. The result, such as it was, appeared anonymously in the "Companion to the Almanac for 1834," in a paper under the title "Wages and Prices," and I then indulged the hope that some of the readers of that most valuable collection, seeing the deficiency of such information for times past, might be led to record the like facts as they should arise in the future. I regret to say, that in this hope I have been disappointed. Again, at the meeting of the Association at Liverpool, in 1837, I took occasion to mention the deficiency to a very numerous body then in attendance upon the Statistical Section, and received many promises of assistance. Those promises were, I doubt

not, given in all sincerity, and yet I am forced to add, that to this hour they remain in every instance unfulfilled. Had the result been different, I might now have been enabled to offer to the Section something better worthy of their attention than the imperfect figures which I have it in my power to bring forward. Imperfect as they are, however, they may supply a link, which otherwise might be found wanting, to future inquirers, as well as enable us, in some degree, to mark the condition of our industrious classes at the present time in comparison with bygone periods.

To begin with what is emphatically called "the staff of life," and the price of which is a thing of the very first importance to those who depend upon daily or weekly wages. The four-pound loaf of bread sold in the bakers' shops in London, has been, in the month of July of each year from 1842 to 1849, as follows:—

1842	9½d.	1846	8½d.
1843	7½	1847	11½
1844	8½	1848	7½
1845	7½	1849	7

When it is considered that from one-half to three-fourths of the earnings of the most numerous class of the people is expended for this one article, it cannot be held of light importance that a saving of 25 per cent. is made in its cost. Such a saving, to the family of a working man, consisting of himself, his wife, and four children, can hardly be less than two shillings per week, which is too often a very considerable proportion of the man's earnings, so that it will greatly depend upon this head of expenditure whether or not he and his family are able to provide themselves with decent clothing and with other matters, which, although perhaps not absolutely nor equally necessary to the support of life, are yet most important towards the comfort and contentment of the family.

The price of meat is, unfortunately, not a matter of such universal interest as the cost of bread, and it is to be feared, that even in ordinarily prosperous times, there are very many of our fellow subjects who are forced to forego its use. But it must be obvious that the numbers thus subjected to privation will, as already explained, greatly depend upon the cost of bread, while in large towns, it will be found upon inquiry, that few or none are, except in the very dearest times, deprived of the occasional, or perhaps the habitual, use of meat.

The prices as quoted in the accounts of markets cannot be taken as the prices actually paid for their retail purchases by the families of working men; they will, however, afford accurate means for comparison, since no doubt the wholesale price of the carcase must govern the retail prices charged for its constituents. The following prices are those given for the primest beef (Scots) and South Down mutton, at Smithfield, in the month of June in each year, 1842 to 1849:—

	Beef.		Mutton.			Beef.		Mutton.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.		s.	d.	s.	d.
1842.....	4	8	4	3	1846.....	3	9	4	3
1843.....	3	10½	4	1½	1847.....	5	6	5	7
1844.....	3	8½	3	10	1848.....	3	10	4	11
1845.....	4	4	4	9	1849.....	3	5	4	2

The prices paid for beef and mutton at St. Thomas's Hospital, in the same years, at Lady-day and Michaelmas, have been as follows:—

	Beef.		Mutton.	
	Lady-Day.	Michaelmas.	Lady-Day.	Michaelmas.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
1842.....	3 4	3 0	3 8	3 4
1843.....	2 8	3 0	3 0	3 4
1844.....	2 8	2 8	3 0	3 4
1845.....	2 8	3 4	3 4	4 0
1846.....	3 8	3 4	4 4	4 0
1847.....	3 8	3 10	4 4	4 6
1848.....	4 0	3 4	4 8	4 0
1849.....	3 0	....	3 8	....

The retail prices paid by the working classes for other articles of food, and for groceries, in a populous district of London, from 1844 to 1848, were as under:—

	1844.	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.
Tea..... per lb.	5s. to 7s.	5s. to 7s.	5s. to 7s.	4s. to 6s.	4s. to 6s.
Raw Sugar..... "	6d. to 7d.	5d. to 6d.	5d. to 6d.	4d. to 5d.	4d. to 5d.
Refined Sugar... "	7½d. to 8½d.	6½d. to 7½d.	6½d. to 7½d.	5½d. to 6½d.	5d. to 6d.
Coffee..... "	1s. 8d. to 2s. 6d.	1s. 8d. to 2s. 6d.	1s. 8d. to 2s. 6d.	1s. 4d. to 2s.	1s. 4d. to 2s.
Cocoa..... "	6d. to 8d.	6d. to 7d.	6d. to 7d.	6d. to 7d.	6d. to 7d.
Rice..... "	2d. to 3d.	2d. to 4d.	3d. to 4d.	3d. to 4d.	2d. to 3d.
Currants..... "	5d. to 7d.	5d. to 7d.	5d. to 7d.	5d. to 7d.	4d. to 6d.
Raisins..... "	5d. to 7d.	5d. to 7d.	5d. to 7d.	4d. to 6d.	4d. to 6d.
Butter..... "	....	10d.	10d.	10d.	9d.
Cheshire Cheese..... "	....	9d.	9d.	9d.	9d.
Derby Cheese... "	....	8d.	8d.	8d.	8d.
Dutch Cheese... "	....	6d.	6d.	6d.	6d.
Lard..... "	....	9d.	9d.	10d.	10d.
Bacon..... per cwt.	....	62s. to 68s.	63s. to 70s.	82s. to 88s.	75s. to 81s.
Eggs..... per 120	....	7s. 6d.	7s. 6d.	7s. 6d.	7s. 6d.

The retail prices of such articles, of the qualities usually consumed by the working classes at Birmingham, during the years from 1844 to June, 1849, have been kindly procured for me by a much respected inhabitant of this town:—

	1844.	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.	June, 1849.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Tea..... per lb.	5 0	5 0	5 0	5 0	4 6	4 0
Sugar, raw..... "	0 7	0 6½	0 5½	0 5½	0 5	0 4½
— refined.. "	0 9	0 9	0 8	0 7½	0 6½	0 6
Coffee..... "	1 8	1 8	1 8	1 8	1 6	1 4
Cocoa..... "	0 10	0 8	0 8	0 8	0 8	0 7
Rice, Patna "	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 4	0 3	0 2½
Oatmeal..... "	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3½	0 3	0 3
Currants..... "	0 6	0 6	0 6	0 7	0 6	0 6
Raisins..... "	0 6	0 6	0 6	0 6	0 5	0 5
Butter..... "	0 10	0 11	1 0	1 0	1 0	0 10
Eggs, No. of, for 1s.	20	20	20	20	20	24

In the course of inquiries made among London tradesmen, while collecting the foregoing list of prices, it was stated that as respects cheese, the working classes seldom or never buy it by weight, but apply at the shop for six-pennyworth, or three-pennyworth, or whatever may be the sum to be laid out, the dearness or cheapness of the article affecting the quantity that they receive for their money. Another fact of the same nature was ascertained from the proprietor of a very large establishment for the sale of linens, woollens, haberdashery, and the like goods. The working man or woman is accustomed to pay certain prices for certain articles, and does not vary the outlay with the varying markets, but buys a 3*s.* or 5*s.* hat or bonnet, a shirt or shift for so much, and so on through the whole list of articles of clothing. The benefit of cheapness reaches them in the quality of their purchases, and as the tendency has for very many years been towards lessened prices, we now see—such, at least, is the case in London—that the working classes are better clad than formerly, keeping in this respect their relative position with the more easy classes, whose dress—especially among ladies—is generally not only better in quality, but actually more costly, than when the articles used were of much higher price than now. When engaged upon an inquiry similar to the present, fifteen years ago, I was informed by a person who gave constant employment to 1,200 people, men and women, in making up articles of clothing used by the working classes, that, taking one article with another, the materials used then cost not more than one-half what they had cost at the close of the war in 1815, and we know that since 1834, there has been a further and very great abatement in the cost of most, if not all, such materials. Strong cotton cloths, the wholesale price of which in 1810 was 10*d.* per yard, sold in 1820 for 9*d.*, had fallen in 1833 to 4*d.*, and may now be bought at from 2*d.* to 2½*d.* per yard. Printed calico, which sold in 1810 at 2*s.* 2*d.*, in 1820 at 1*s.* 4*d.*, in 1833, the Excise duty having been removed, at 6*d.* to 8*d.*, may now be bought at from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 8*s.* per piece of 28½ yards, or from 1½*d.* to 3½*d.* per yard. The increased use of cotton in this country, so far beyond the increase in our export of cotton goods, proves that the people, and especially the working people, who are the great consumers of cotton goods among us, have fully profited by their progressive cheapening.

The consumption of such articles as are of home production, we have no satisfactory means of determining, but we may feel quite certain, that as respects such of them as are articles of necessity, as well as those which have become so through the usages of society, a fall in price when unaccompanied by circumstances that oppress the people, must be accompanied by an increase in their use. If we had any doubts upon this head, they must, however, be dispelled when we find that other articles of which, being brought from distant countries, we know the quantities used, are so used in greatly increased quantities. The consumption in each year from 1842 to 1848 of such of the articles of which retail prices have been given as are imported, have been :

	1842.	1843.	1844.	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.
Sugar cwt.	3,868,466	4,028,307	4,129,443	4,856,604	5,220,248	5,779,508	6,208,872
Tea lbs.	37,355,911	40,293,393	41,363,770	44,193,433	46,740,344	46,314,821	48,735,971
Coffee "	28,519,646	29,979,404	31,352,382	34,293,190	36,754,578	37,441,373	37,106,292
Cocoa "	2,246,569	2,547,934	2,589,977	2,579,497	2,951,206	3,079,198	2,935,479
Rice cwt.	396,922	315,359	432,480	372,274	545,883	971,694	925,731
Currants "	196,379	254,330	284,694	309,485	358,761	331,336	380,500
Raisins "	186,240	236,826	202,230	204,960	238,255	212,024	228,542

It appears thus, that a reduction in the retail price of sugar from 7*d.* to 4½*d.* for raw, and from 9*d.* to 6*d.* for refined sugar, has increased the consumption, since 1844, by 2,079,429 cwt. or 50 per cent. The reduction of 1*s.* per lb. in tea, viz. from 5*s.* to 4*s.*, has caused an additional consumption of 7,372,201 lbs., or 18 per cent. The retail price of coffee has fallen from 1*s.* 8*d.* to 1*s.* 4*d.*, and the consumption has been augmented by 5,753,910 lbs., or 18 per cent.; thus adding very materially to the comforts of the working classes, and chiefly the artisan class, among whom the increased quantities here noticed have principally been used.

I have been kindly favoured with a statement of prices actually paid at St. Thomas's Hospital in London, for various articles of constant consumption there in each quarter of the year, from 1842 to the present time, and have appended the same to these remarks. The prices are of course below those which are paid by individuals in their daily retail purchases, but they will better serve to show the variation in the markets, and may therefore be found useful.

From what has been already stated, we might almost necessarily infer, that the people generally are in a condition of comparative comfort. If it were desired to ascertain the condition of the upper and middle classes of society, we should have to investigate the increase or decrease of luxuries, since the quantities which these classes consume of the articles of daily use, already mentioned, may be considered to vary in only a very small degree, if at all, with the varying condition of the nation at large. That the use of sugar, and tea, and coffee, for example, has greatly augmented, affords ample evidence, that the very large proportion of our numbers who depend for the support of themselves and their families upon their employment by the possessors of capital, have been enabled to enjoy more of the comforts of life than heretofore, and that the state of the population, generally, is such as should impart to us a feeling of satisfaction. It may be well, however, to show what have been the weekly earnings of some classes of our artisans, and I have again to express regret at the small, and, in that respect, unsatisfactory amount of information, which it has been possible to procure on that head. This is, on the present occasion, confined to iron-works and cotton-mills, and I will close what I have to offer, by venturing to call upon such of my auditors as may have it in their power, to add to the scanty sum of our knowledge upon this really very important head, either by publishing the same to the world themselves, or by enabling some other persons to render that service. For my own part, I shall esteem it as a personal favour, if any gentleman will at any time communicate to me, from his own experience, such information as he may possess, showing the earnings of any classes of workmen.

1850.]

during the Years from 1842 to 1849.

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A Return of the Prices of the undermentioned Articles used at St. Thomas's Hospital, Southwark.

	Beef, without bone.	Mutton, Legs and Loins.	Butter, Carlow.	Cheese, Double Gloster.	Sugar.	Salt.	Pota- toes.	Rice.	Pure Milk.
	Per Stone.	Per Stone.	Per Cwt.	Per Cwt.	Per Cwt.	Per Cwt.	Per Cwt.	Per Cwt.	Per Gallon.
1842.	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>
March	3 4	3 8	96	60	78	5 0	....	33 0	1 0
June	3 0	3 4	94	56	78	5 0	....	33 0	1 0
September	3 0	3 4	94	56	78	5 0	....	33 0	1 0
December	2 8	3 0	94	56	78	5 0	....	33 0	1 0
1843.									
March	2 8	3 0	94	56	76	5 0	....	33 0	1 0
June	2 8	3 0	94	56	76	5 0	....	33 0	1 0
September	3 0	3 4	84	56	76	5 0	....	33 0	1 0
December	2 8	3 0	88	56	76	5 0	....	33 0	1 0
1844.									
March	2 8	3 0	88	56	68	4 6	....	32 0	1 0
June	2 8	3 4	88	56	74	4 6	....	32 0	1 0
September	2 8	3 4	88	56	74	4 6	....	32 0	1 0
December	2 8	3 4	106	56	74	4 0	....	30 0	1 0
1845.									
March	2 8	3 4	106	56	62	4 0	....	30 0	1 0
June	3 4	4 0	100	56	62	4 0	....	30 0	1 0
September	3 4	4 0	94	56	64	4 0	....	43 0	1 0
December	3 4	4 0	104	56	64	4 0	....	35 0	1 0
1846.									
March	3 8	4 4	104	56	64	4 6	....	35 0	1 0
June	3 4	4 0	90	56	64	3 9	....	33 0	0 9
September	3 4	4 0	102		58	3 6	6	28 0	0 9
December	3 8	4 4	106		53	3 6	9	28 0	0 9
1847.				Discontinued as an article of diet.					
March	3 8	4 4	106		59	3 6	12	30 0	0 9
June	4 4	5 0	102		59	3 6	20	28 0	0 10
September	4 0	4 8	104		54	3 6	6	26 0	0 10
December	4 4	5 0	104		54	3 6	7	21 0	0 10
1848.									
March	4 0	4 8	104		54	3 6	8	19 0	0 10
June	3 8	4 4	100		54	3 6	8	17 0	0 9½
September	3 4	4 0	94		54	3 6	8	18 0	0 9½
December	3 2	3 10	94		54	3 6	8	....	0 9½
1849.									
March	3 0	3 8	94		54	3 6	8	16 0	0 9½
June	2 8	3 4	88		54	3 6	8	....	0 9½
September ....	....	....	....		....	....	....	....	....
December ....	....	....	....		....	....	....	....	....

1st May, 1846. Milk purchased by contract, from Romford, Essex; sent by Eastern Counties Railway.

It is hardly possible to over-estimate the importance of the subject to which I have now ventured, imperfectly, to call the attention of the section. So long as, in any country, the whole earnings of the labouring classes are required to procure for them the bare necessities of life, we must look in vain for any advancement in the social and moral condition of the people. On the other hand, if their earnings are habitually found sufficient, not merely to sustain life, but to provide for themselves and their families its decencies and some of its comforts, and especially if this shall have been their condition for any continued period of time, they will not willingly fall back in the scale of civilization, but rather will strive to go forward, and among other efforts to that end, will gladly avail themselves of such means as they may find within their reach, to give instruction to their children, whereby their intelligence being cultivated, their labour will be rendered more productive, and of necessity will be better remunerated, thus enabling them to make further progress in the social scale, and to provide the means of still greater advancement for those who will succeed them.

MANCHESTER.

Net Weekly Earnings of Factory Hands in Full Employment and also during the Period of Depression in each of the following Years.

	1844.	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.	1849.	This is a good mill, on coarse work; and one which I think may be considered a fair average of wages.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	
Card Room—Males	13 6½	13 8	11 4	7 9	12 0	12 0	
Females	8 9½	8 10	6 6	3 4	8 9	8 6	
Spinners and Piecers	10 0½	12 0	11 10	6 10	11 7	12 0	
Power-Loom Weavers* }	10 1	9 9	8 10	4 10	9 0	9 5	
Male and Female							
Power-Loom Helpers	4 7	4 6	4 3	2 0	4 8	4 8	
Mechanics	22 4	20 6	20 8	18 1	19 6	19 3	

* Working two looms only.

Weekly Wages paid in the Years 1844 and 1849.

	1844.	1849.	This is solely a spinning mill; no weaving; a very respectable establishment; coarse work.
	s. d.	s. d.	
Card Room—Males	15 0	12 0	
Females	7 6	7 6	
Self-Acting Spinners	14 0	15 6	
Ditto Piecers.....	7 0	7 9	
Throstle Spinners—Females	8 0	7 6	
Mechanics	28 0	28 0	

Average Weekly Wages for each Individual in the following Years.

Year.	Per head.	This is a mill producing fine yarns; it worked full time during a period of depression. It would appear from this, that in 1844-5-6, when the hours for working were 69 per week, the average earnings per head for the three years were 10s. 5½d., which have become, in 1849, for 58 hours' work, 9s. 10½d., making a difference of 7½d. per head, or 5½ per cent., whilst the difference between 1844 and 1849 is 5½d. or 4½ per cent., the difference in the hours being 16 per cent.
	s. d.	
1844	10 4½	
1845	10 10½	
1846	10 3	
1847	10 9½	
1848	10 3½	
1849	9 10½	

Average Weekly Earnings of Workmen employed at an Iron Work in South Wales, from 1844 to 1849.

	1844.		1845.		1846.		1847.		1848.		1849.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Colliers	13	0	16	2	20	4	20	2	16	1	14	3
Miners	10	7	12	4	15	7	15	9	12	1	10	9
Labourers	11	0	11	0	12	8	13	9	11	10	11	0
Founders	23	9	26	11	33	8	33	5	35	0	30	4
Fillers	22	0	25	10	29	10	31	3	32	7	30	4
Cinder Fillers	21	0	19	0	21	8	23	6	22	11	21	1
Refiners	37	8	39	3	51	2	40	7	48	9	39	6
Puddlers	22	7	30	6	35	8	32	4	30	11	25	7
Ballers	22	2	32	7	45	1	38	8	31	7	23	0
Rollers	33	7	58	10	72	0	80	0	60	9	35	6
Rail Straighteners	20	2	35	5	49	7	47	8	36	8	18	2

Table of Wages Paid to Different Classes of Workmen at an Iron Work in Staffordshire, in June of each Year, from 1844 to 1849, (probable earnings in a period of 12 hours).

	1844.	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.	1849.
Colliers—Thick Coal...	4s. 6d.	5s. 6d.	6s. to 7s.	6s. to 7s.	5s.	4s. 6d.
Ditto Thin Coal...	3s. 8d.	4s.	4s. to 5s.	5s.	3s. to 3s. 6d.	3s. to 3s. 3d.
Miners	3s. 3d.	4s.	4s. to 5s.	5s.	3s. 6d.	3s. 3d.
Boys	1s. to 2s.	1s. to 2s. 6d.	1s. to 3s.	1s. 6d. to 3s.	1s. to 2s.	1s. to 2s.
Blast Furnace Men—						
Keepers	5s.	6s. 6d.	7s.	7s. 6d.	4s. 6d.	4s.
Fillers	3s. 6d.	4s. 6d.	5s.	5s.	3s. 10d.	3s. 4d.
Bridge Stockers, &c....	3s.	3s. 6d.	4s.	4s.	3s.	2s. 6d.
Forge and Mill Men—						
Puddlers—1st hands ..	6s.	...	8s.	8s.	7s.	5s. 6d.
Ditto 2nd „	2s. 6d. to 4s.	...	...	3s. to 5s.	2s. 6d. to 4s.	2s. 4d. to 3s. 8d.
Rollers—1st hands ..	...	...	...	8s. to 15s.	6s. to 12s.	5s. to 10s.
Ditto assistants	...	...	...	4s. to 5s.	3s. 4d. to 4s.	3s. to 3s. 6d.
Heaters	...	...	...	8s. to 10s.	6s. to 8s.	5s. to 7s.
Ditto assistants	...	...	...	4s. to 5s.	3s. 4d. to 4s.	3s. to 3s. 8d.
Engine Keepers	...	4s.	...	...	3s. to 4s.	3s. to 3s. 10d.
Blacksmiths	...	4s. 6d.	...	...	3s. to 4s. 6d.	3s. to 4s.
Carpenters	...	3s. 6d.	...	...	3s. 6d.	3s. 4d.
Labourers	...	2s. 4d.	...	...	2s. 2d.	2s. 2d.

Average Weekly Earnings in an Iron Work, in each Year, from 1846 to 1849.

	1846.	1847.	1848.	1849.
	s.	d.	s.	d.
Colliers	19	10	20	0
Miners	19	1	19	0
Patchmen and Labourers	13	3	11	8
Masons, Smiths, and Carpenters	14	9	15	4
Fillers of Furnaces	30	0	35	0
Cinder Fillers	22	0	29	2
Founders	30	0	35	0
Refiners	35	0	48	6
Puddlers—Master	30	0	31	0
2nd hand	18	0	18	6
Ballers	38	0	42	0
Rollers	62	0	72	0
Rail Straighteners	43	0	46	0
Day work at rails	16	0	17	7

Statement of the Workmen's Earnings at an Iron Work in North Wales, in each Year, from 1844 to 1849.

	1844.	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.	1849.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Colliers, per stent, or under 8 hours' work	1 6	2 0	2 6	2 6	2 0	1 9½
Miners' earnings are from 1½d. to 2d. per stent below the Colliers.						
Labourers.....per week	8 6	9 6	12 0	12 0	11 0	10 0
Furnace Fillers....."	14 6	15 6	19 0	18 6	18 6	17 6
Cinder Fillers....."	14 6	15 6	19 0	18 6	18 6	17 6
Furnace Keepers....."	19 6	23 0	28 0	27 0	23 0	22 0
Refiners....."	16 0	25 6	32 0	30 0	24 0	21 0
Puddlers....."	22 0	32 0	32 0	32 0	26 0	24 0
Heaters or Ballers....."	17 0	22 0	27 0	29 0	22 6	21 0
Rollers....."	30 0	47 0	76 0	77 0	46 0	44 6
Rail Straighteners....."	30 0	24 0	30 0	30 0	24 0	16 0

The following are the Average Weekly Earnings of 230 Hands employed in one Mill in Cotton Spinning, for each Year, from 1846 to 1849.

1846.	The earnings averaged 10s. 0d. per head of all ages and both sexes, of eight years of age and upwards, working 12 hours a day.
1847.	" " 8 4½
1848.	" " 8 2
1849.	" " 9 4

During these years, trade was bad, and the working of the mill averaged about 4 days a week.

Only 11 hours a day.

Proposal for preserving and making a general index of the Parish Registers anterior to 1837. By REV. E. WYATT-EDGEELL.

[Read before the Statistical Society of London, 19th November, 1849.]

THE Parish Registers subsequent to 1837 possess little interest, inasmuch as they have been superseded by the Civil Registry. But the books prior to that date, which may now be looked upon as a completed series, are the only existing annals of some forty or fifty millions of human beings who have passed from the world; and it is therefore a matter not merely of interest, but of duty, to rescue such documents from the decay into which they are rapidly falling. The purpose of the present paper is to inquire how this may be best accomplished; and at the same time to consider whether the information contained in the Parish Registers, which has hitherto been used only for legal purposes, may not be so concentrated as to be rendered available for the higher purposes of literature and science.

Unless some measures are taken for preserving them, the older portions of our Parish Register books will soon become extinct. It is true that by the law of 1812, it was made imperative on every parish to provide an iron chest for the security of its books; and, as no expense was spared in carrying out this part of the Act, they are now